

DX LISTENING DIGEST 00-30, Feb. 25, 2000
edited by Glenn Hauser

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** ANGOLA. Former head of UNITA radio defects to government
Excerpts from report by the Angolan news agency Angop web site on 23rd February

Luanda: Jose Chicomo, the former director of [UNITA leader Jonas] Savimbi's Vorgan [Voice of the Resistance of the Black Cockerel] radio service, has just turned himself over to the Angolan authorities in Catumbela, Benguela Province. Chicomo, who served as Jonas Savimbi's special correspondent for a great many years, described the terrorist leader as someone who does not know what he wants. Chicomo is also known as Chico Torres... Jose Chicomo is the second Vorgan corespondent to turn himself over to the Angolan authorities over the past few months. Papagaio Mussili, who spent 20 years in Jamba, fled with his family to Namibia and then Luanda. The latest military developments in Angola, namely the Angolan Armed Forces [FAA] offensive on various fronts, have caused several of Jonas Savimbi's officials to abandon him. As a result of the FAA offensive, Andulo, Bailundo, Jamba and a number of other locations have come under government control. Source: Angop news agency web site, Luanda, in Portuguese 23 Feb 00 ((c) BBC Monitoring via DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** AUSTRALIA. Re: Darwin and Dummy Loads.

I believe that Radio Australia Engineering should use their extensive Web presence, or on-air, to notify the global listening community of the exact nature of the operations at Darwin. Not to do so will invite unwarranted time-consuming speculation and discussion, and could cause the issue to be raised in the Australian Parliament by the Opposition Party during Question Time. Indeed, the Australian community has a right to know what is being done with ITS money up there at the Cox Peninsula!

Some clarification should also be made by RA as to the exact nature of these "tests" - the information made available to me was that these were/are short duration operations limited to a few seconds/minutes, carrier without programming, into "dummy" loads. Other information suggests that some unspecified communications facility in the NT was/is being used for irregular test transmissions, carrying RA programming and tuning signals, but on frequencies well outside of the recognized SW bands.

The long duration (one hour) transmission heard here in Melbourne

during weekdays on 9580 from 0030-0130 is the usual RA English service, with super-strong signal levels, suggestive of emanation from Shepparton or another site in New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania, Central Australia, or Victoria, via ground-wave coverage. Propagation at that time does not favour Darwin. As I had suggested, this may not appear to be the same operations as reported by others.

Some months ago I compiled a Professional Consultant's Report to RA Engineering concerning proposed spectrum usage and coverage of the Northern Territory HF operations. The terms of that report were that it was to be considered "Classified", with its contents NOT to be disclosed to other parties.

Whilst the hobby community is looking at "Darwin", it might also consider Katherine, Tennant Creek or Alice Springs as the source of unscheduled HF activity. (Bob Padula, Melbourne, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** AUSTRALIA/GERMANY. Another response to Richard Buckby, DXLD 00-29:

Hello Richard,

As a addition to your remarks: The 250 kW mediumwave transmitters, which were installed in the Fifties at various GDR sites (two each at Berlin-K^openick and Burg, a single one at Schwerin-W^obbelin, Wachenbrunn and Dresden-Wilsdruff) had a built in dummy load. These were systems of big tubes, in which distilled water was streaming. It was the same water which was anyway needed to cool the PA stage tubes; incidentally SRW-357 types, large beasts of some 1,50 metres height and in the head of some 30 centimeters diameter, rather impressive when glowing (I had the lucky experience to visit the Wilsdruff transmitter when still on the air). So the dummy load needed no own cooling system and it was not too striking inside the anyway large PA stage, which occupied the half hall, simply divided by panes to protect people from the high voltage.

Today dummy loads seem to be rare. Back in last year some tests were done at Leipzig-Wiederau on the new Thomcast transmitter (783 kHz) to find out why it was working so unstably. During these tests the transmitter was deliberately overmodulated with test tones to force it to trip. All this happened when it was connected with the usual aerial; I was asleep during these tests, so I didn't know how harmful the splatter was...

Regarding Darwin, considering all reports about it, they have evidently a "real" dummy load there but the recent tests were done to evaluate the performance of the antenna system, i.e. it was in any respect "real" transmissions, using full 250/300 kW into the curtain arrays. What makes me wonder is that they fired up the Radio Australia

interval signal (evidently locally generated like at Deutsche Welle transmitters, who used to insert the tinkle prior to the programmes from their own source). It was stated that no other audio signal was at hand, but I'm a little surprised about that; how will they do any measurements on the transmitters with no test tones available?
Regards, (Kai Ludwig, Germany)

** CANADA. Hi Glenn! Re Will Martin's comments on "Madly Off..." being missing on Dec. 19, that would not have been due to the technicians' strike. The strike only started late on the local evening of Dec. 30, i.e. around 0330 UTC on Dec. 31. I don't know what might have gone wrong at either Montreal or Sackville on the morning of Feb. 20, when you found BBC WS on 17710, instead of RCI. By the way, I should mention that, as of Sat. Feb. 19, the programme "Nova Scotia Kitchen Party" has returned to CBC Radio One, and also to RCI. RCI timings are Sat 2200-2300 to Europe/Africa (replacing "Quirks and Quarks"); Sun 0000-0100 to the Americas (replacing "Global Village"). 73- (Bill Westenhaver, QC, DX LISTENING DIGEST) Rather, 2205 and 0005 or so

** CANADA. Hello, This week on Quirks & Quarks we are devoting the entire program to: Science in an Uncertain Age: a special full-edition report from the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. This past weekend in Washington, more than two thousand scientists gathered for the yearly AAAS meetings - and the intrepid Quirks crew was there, too. We'll have the highlights on this weekend's program, including the physics of baseball, the future of space exploration, the impact of humans on ecological systems, the battle between science and the humanities, and the debate over the expanding universe. All that and more on Quirks & Quarks this Saturday, right after the noon news, on Radio One. (Bob McDonald, Quirks and Quarks) So still on RCI Sunday 1305+ on 9640, 13650, 17710 (DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** CONGO DR. State radio and TV to get new shortwave transmitter
Text of report by Congolese radio from Kinshasa on 23rd February

The national radio will soon be heard throughout the country. A new 10-kW shortwave transmitter has been ordered for the national radio from an Italian company, TelConsult AD, with a credit line of 1m dollars granted by President Laurent-Desire Kabila.

Jose Kasengwa, director-general of Congolese National Radio-Television [RTNC], announced that the new transmitters will be delivered to Kinshasa in March. Source: Radio-Television Nationale Congolaise, Kinshasa, in French 1100 gmt 23 Feb 00 ((c) BBC Monitoring excerpted by gh, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** COSTA RICA. This is a ``make or break`` year for RFPI. Either it

will grow, or disappear from the air. More new Friends of RFPI are very much needed. This will lead to matching funds. Join for \$40 to RFPI, P O Box 20728, Portland, OR 97294 (James and Debra Latham, RFPI Mailbag Feb 25 via gh, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** GREECE. VOG has reorganized its schedule; the Interprogram has 30 minutes in each language, such as English at 2100 on 9375, 7450. More about this via <http://www.rnw.nl> (Andy Sennitt, RN Media Network Feb 24 via gh) Just in case this applied to the VOA/USA relays at 2100, I checked 17565 and 17705, but they were in Greek/music (gh, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** ISRAEL. 15785.03 (new frequency) Galei Zahal, 1405-1450+, a lot of pop songs, ID "...Galei Zahal", at 1430 news in brief mentioning Chechnya, Tel-Aviv, fair to weak here in Moscow (Nick Pashkevich, Feb 24, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** OKLAHOMA. KTOU-LP ch 22 in OKC, with the Cadena Independiente Nacional, which runs old movies dubbed in Spanish in prime time, also seen on channel 17 now, including the KTOU 22 ID at 0230 UT Feb 24 when tropo enhancement was up; no sign of KDOR-17 Bartlesville with TBN. So where is this transmitted from? (Glenn Hauser, Enid, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** U S A. The Director and the Program Director of VOA are pleased to announce the following changes within the VOA News Division:

Kevin Lynch will become Assignments Editor in our London News Center, and Challiss McDonough will take over as Johannesburg Bureau Chief. We're sure both will be tremendously successful in their new roles.

After three years as Director of the News Division, Sonja Pace has been selected as the new Chief of our Moscow Bureau. We thank Sonja for her dedication and leadership in the Newsroom and look forward to hearing her back on the air. Although she will not leave for Moscow until mid-summer, Sonja will depart from the Newsroom shortly to begin intensive language and area studies courses.

As the VOA newsroom evolves into a multimedia operation, we will be redesigning the position of News Director to supervise our radio, television, and Internet news output. We will recruit both internally and externally for someone who can fulfill this role and hope to have a new VOA News Director in place by the time the multimedia newsroom opens on the first floor in the fall.

We are fortunate that veteran correspondent Andre De Nesnera has agreed to serve as Acting Director of the News Division. Andre will join Managing Editor Jerry McKinney, Acting Assignments Editor Jim

Malone, and Program Manager Cindy Krasinski as the interim management team in the News Division during the transition period.

We would like to thank all of these outstanding journalists for their dedication to VOA, and wish them much success in their new roles.

(Sanford J. Ungar, Myrna R. Whitworth, VOA press release via Kim Andrew Elliott) S. Pace was the subject of a newsroom petition to remove her, previously reported here (DX LISTENING DIGEST)

** U S A. George Thurman and I noticed that WBCQ-2 was on with Brother Scare around 0230 UT Thu Feb 24. Visions of yet another frequency totally wasted, but this was //7415, just testing 2 after a breakdown; it was on the next day, but not the next night (Glenn Hauser, OK, DX LISTENING DIGEST) ###